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CROSS-THINKERS.

For what end it may have been designed, we cannot tell; but the fact is certain that, in all questions, great and small, public and private, there is a class of minds which are sure to embrace the side of weakest argument. For a palpable and certain truth such persons have no relish. A great broad principle, which recommends itself to the common sense of the bulk of mankind, is, in their eyes, an impertinence. In a doctrine everywhere prevalent and popular, they see only vulgarity. A deduction irresistibly logical only excites in them the suspicion of some profounder error. If, on the other hand, you tell them something extremely hard to believe, they will make a manful struggle to swallow it, and probably will succeed. As Milton's Satan says: 'Evil, be thou my good,' so they cry: 'Sophism, be thou our reason!'

The pious Jesuit who said: 'I believe it because it is impossible,' was a type of this class. Any one can believe the possible—there is no merit in that; but to accept in unshrinking faith something utterly incongruous with experience and common sense, is to do that which few can do, and to do it is, accordingly, great glory. There is some vanity in the matter, after all. If I go with the multitude, my voice is lost in it. I may be right, but I attract no attention. But if I stand up by myself, or with some small party or sect, and declare my attachment to some strangely heteroclite ideas, I at least do not pass notelessly. The mass feel a little troubled by my dissent, and perhaps even think it worth while to take some pains to bring me over to their way of thinking. One becomes somebody in these circumstances.

It is also observable of this class of thinkers, that, even when they concur with the majority in any proposition of faith, they quite disregard all the leading and important points of the system, and fasten exclusively upon some merely external or accidental peculiarities. A fundamental doctrine which most men feel goes down into the profoundest depths of their moral being, has no attraction for them; but they are careful to see the upholstery and millinery of the system preserved in all their ancient integrity. Just because a thing looks of no consequence, they think it important. Were it really to become of consequence, they would desert it.

In any new political attitude of the nation, our friends are always seen, like Harry Wynd in the Scotch story, fighting for their own hand. While the country at large concurs in thinking the war with Russia necessary and just, however much to be deplored, Mr Urquhart stands out, a solitary dervish,

proclaiming that, in the secret reality of the case, it is a conspiracy of the British ministers with the Czar against Turkey! According to him, we are to have a terrific war merely to mask an ulterior design totally opposite to what appears! Cross-thinkers never hesitate as to the amount of wickedness of which they believe human nature to be capable. To make out some favourite improbability, they would not hesitate to consider it possible, regarding a public man, that he would coolly order the sacrifice of two millions of fellow-creatures for the gratification of a whim; but they are sure to relieve from such charges all the real villains of the play, and to attach the possible guilt only to some individual noted for his philanthropy and good intentions.

An almost superhuman suspiciousness is a constant feature of the Cross-thinker. In his headlong tendency to suspect, he produces the most curious medley of ideas. He will proclaim, of some noted demagogue who has not a particle of religion in his constitution, that he is an emissary of the pope. He considers Mr Cobden as secretly in the pay of the Czar. The Jesuits are figures in most of his plots; and the less they are seen in anything, he deems their presence there the more certain. According to him, an author is not the author of his own books. There is always some person behind backs who writes them for him. He may write some other body's books, but not his own. When the Cross-thinker sees a political opponent taking a course which shews a remarkable degree of moral courage, and obviously exposes him to damage in his worldly affairs, he feels assured there is some transcendental selfishness at the bottom of it. When the 3000 English clergy withdrew from their charges, rather than submit to the Act of Uniformity, he would have been quite clear that they had good grounds for expecting to better their incomes by what they were doing. A very martyr burning at the stake would scarcely get credit for sincerity with our Cross-thinker. There would be great reason to suspect that he had been all along acting a part, and at the last moment had expected to be reprieved.

In considering by what means any great result has been brought about, our friends overlook all the prominent and great causes, and seldom fail, with an air of mysterious sagacity, to draw our attention to certain others so small as to appear almost indifferent, or which possibly you are more inclined to rank as obstructions. For example, they would never think of attributing the best points of the general character of the gentlemen of England to either the inherent qualities of the stock, or what may be sound and good in the education to which they are subjected. They

would profess to see some vast influence for good in the flogging-system of the public schools—that system by which a boy of fourteen is entitled to tyrannise over a boy of ten, and make a menial of him, as if it could be good for any one to be either oppressed or an oppressor. With a perverse ingenuity which would be amusing if it were not so sadly out of harmony with truth, our friends will argue for a virtue in that which is in reality a vice. They will give to a base old bad thing, which only has not succeeded in preventing real intellectual and moral advancement, the credit of all the good which has been accomplished. The fact is, a true cause is a vulgar stupid thing, which anybody can appreciate. If you wish to make anything for yourself out of the case, you must strive to establish some no-cause as a cause—always the more merit the less tenable your propositions. Let no one be afraid of wanting support for his conclusions in favour of such improbabilities. Just in proportion to the untenableness of his doctrines, he will be the more certain to have a party rallying round him, to proclaim his amazing profundness of view, his irresistible logic, his almost supernatural sagacity.

Cross-thinking has of course a literature of its own, and also a system of criticism. One Corypheus of the set writes a huge history, in which everything is traced to the least operative causes, and the lessons of all the principal events are duly misread. Another is the oracle of a journal, which for a long course of years has done all it can to resist whatever is calculated for the good of the community. In Cross-thinking criticism, you find all the swans of the great public described as geese, and all the geese as swans. Such was the case with Horace Walpole, of whom it is remarked that, all through his correspondence, he speaks favourably of only the second-rate geniuses. From his whimsical, jealous, and illiberal mind, it clearly appears that a manly appreciation of the true wits was not to be expected. The Cross-thinkers, however, are not always themselves of mean account in literature. It is rather a sad reflection, that some of the men of most brilliant literary powers rank among those who devote themselves on all occasions to make the worse appear the better reason. Unfortunately, to possess eloquence is not necessarily to possess also the inclination to use it solely for good ends. Crotchet and vanity take the direction of but too much of it. The very fact that it is much easier to make a stir with eccentric opinions, than with those which have the support of truth and general approbation, is the cause why an immense proportion of the talent which arises is from the first perverted, and ever afterwards misused. And we hardly know a more sad spectacle than that of a man of brilliant gifts being thus led into false relations to his species, and condemned at the end to look back upon efforts of which the best that can be said is only this, that they have not been sufficiently powerful to extinguish truth, or obstruct the course of civilisation.

Cross-thinking has a great charm for young minds. It is quaint and striking, often droll—looks like something to which the Few are privileged—is free from that vulgarity which is so apt to beset any great cause in which the sympathies and interests of multitudes are concerned. Hence young men of talent are extremely liable to fall into the habit, and so to get into connection with professions and parties from which they cannot afterwards shake themselves free. It is for them a great misfortune, for generally it tends to frustrate the benefits of what talent and education they may possess. Powers and accomplishments that might have advanced good objects for the public, are then spent in a necessarily futile attempt to obstruct them. Some false glory may result. In other words, a foolish few will applaud, while the majority look on with wonder and pity. But in the long-run, all is found to have been barren, and wanting of true savour. The

world will at the utmost accord the meed of talents misapplied. Even from those who have all along been applauding, there will only be found that kind of support which the reckless get from their friends, and the vicious from the companions of their iniquity. The final sentence is—'Here lies a man who chose to live in vain.'

WEARYFOOT COMMON.

CHAPTER XX.

DOUGHTY DEEDS.

'WHAT! only at breakfast, Fancourt?' said Adolphus, as he entered the hermit's cell; 'you are usually livelier in the morning than that.'

'I have already breakfasted,' replied his friend—'I think I have. O yes, long ago; but I fancy I have been dreaming awake, probably visiting some of my châteaux en Espagne. You know we have nothing to do this morning. Isn't it odd how habit steals over one? I fancy every now and then that I want to go and dawdle away the forenoon with the Simpletons; and they are just now at Wearyfoot Common, with their day half over, and Sara, perhaps, lounging on the garden-seat she told me of, overhung with—no, not with shadowy foliage at this season, but with spring-buds—and thinking, thinking—I wonder what she is thinking of!—London, I shouldn't wonder, the Picture Exhibition, the beasts and beastesses in the Park Gardens, the Whispering Gallery'—

'What is all that to you?' said Adolphus impatiently—'you are in a dream still, and don't know what you are saying!'

'How should I know, when we are all at sea in this way? It's a horrid bore to have to think of how to pass one's day. If those people had only had the sense to stay where they were, I could have cut out work for them that would have lasted the whole spring and summer through. I have a good mind to take that hairy captain's invitation, and go down by and by to run upon the Common, as he says. How the donkeys would scamper before us! and how Rosy-apple's cheeks would glow with the exercise, her bonnet falling back upon her shoulders, and her veil streaming upon the wind!'

'I tell you what, Fancourt,' said Adolphus surlily, 'I have more to do this morning than to listen to such stuff. I have to go to hear my doom from Claudia; and I came to the Albany just to steady my nerves by having some talk beforehand with a man of the world. I know it is absurd to feel put out by such a business. You would ask the question as calmly as if it were only to ascertain whether she were disengaged for a quadrille; and when refused, you would express mildly your desolation, and your good wishes for her happiness with another, look interestingly sad at her through your eye-glass, then inquiringly at the window to see whether it rained, settle your kids upon your wrist, pick up your hat from the floor, and saunter bowingly out of the room. Now I can't come it in that line—I'm not up to it; and Claudia has such a way of looking at one—she sees into your very marrow! I wish I hadn't been such a fool as to ask an interview; a letter would have answered the same purpose. You will at least walk with me to the door, and wait till I come out?'

'Yes, and I will give you a few hints as we go along.'

'What I want you specially to tell me is how to bring her to the scratch if she wants to fight off, with the excuse of her uncle's death, and so on. I must have the thing settled this morning, that I may run down to the Hall by to-night's mail-train. That beggarly vagrant, it seems, is to be off presently for Australia,

so that my last lingering doubts in that quarter are at an end, and the field is fairly open. I thought Sara looked sorry when we parted—didn't you?

'Yes,' said Fancourt musing—'come along.'

Lord Luxton and his daughter were at the time in consultation as usual, though on an unusual subject. It was far on in the forenoon before the young lady was visible; her father had had time to go out to hear the news, and he had made several business visits, and been to his club, before he returned. When he did return, however, Claudia was at her post. The tempest of the preceding day had swept away, and left her as calm and sunny as ever. More sunny: the light of her eyes, which yesterday morning was hot and feverish, was now a steady and exulting blaze. Her cheek, too, was a shade warmer than usual; and her father's anxieties respecting her were dispersed at the first glance. Still, he made no allusion to the scene that had taken place: he, in fact, was never at perfect ease with his daughter; there seemed to be something between their souls which rendered impossible the ordinary familiarity of such near relationship as existed between them.

'The crisis, Claudia,' said he suddenly, after the glance that reassured him, 'is more rapid than we supposed—all will be at an end to-night!'

'To-night!' and she flushed scarlet.

'Yes; the minds of ministers are made up. They will be beaten on a question not necessarily a vital one, and, in order to escape a worse overthrow, will take the opportunity of going out—in the confidence of being reelected ere long by a new parliament.'

'To-night!'

'This arrangement is secret. Everything will happen accidentally; up to the last moment they will be supposed to be as secure as a rock for some time to come.'

'That is well!' and her breath came freely. 'Then there is yet time: do you not know what is to be done?—you have to redeem your promise to Mr Oaklands! The appointment, although respectable, is only a stepping-stone, and a government in the position you describe will have no delicacy in filling it. But there is not a moment to lose; your claim, which, you know, they are prepared to allow, must be in the proper hands before five o'clock. Come!—and she hastily placed writing-materials before her father, and stood by his chair with her eyes rivetted on his.'

'Upon my word, Claudia,' said the peer, 'I think you are too precipitate in this matter. The young man was extremely insolent to me yesterday.'

'To us, if you call it insolence. But his remarks were applied to the conduct of which he supposed us guilty, and would you give them force by making them true? Write at once—there is not a moment to lose!'

'I really do not know what conduct you allude to,' said the peer, with vexation: 'fellows in the position of Oaklands are more frequently than otherwise kept dangling for many years before being placed in independence for life. What is your interest in this young man? Why should I hamper government for him at a time like this, and by the very fact bind myself to their fortunes in opposition?'

'You hamper nobody, for you have received the promise of government, and they expect you to claim it; and as the reward is for service already performed, if it binds anybody at all, it is Mr Oaklands himself, and more to you than to them.'

Here a servant came in with a visiting-card: Mr Seacole was in the drawing-room.

'What do you mean to do here?' said Lord Luxton, when the man had withdrawn, and in a tone that shewed he was not sorry for the diversion—'the question is of more importance than the one we are discussing. Mr Seacole is far beneath the match to which

your station, personal appearance, and talents entitle you; but'—

'But, nevertheless, you would be content to see your daughter the wife of a small country squire, mean in abilities, undistinguished in person and in mind. You would have her chained down to a rank from which it would be impossible for her husband to rise, and where the noblest use to which she could put the talents you give her credit for would be

To suckle fools and chronicle small-beer!'

'You are bitter this morning, Claudia: but how is it that your humour passes over Mr Oaklands so indulgently? Does mere genius make up for everything in the world to which you have been accustomed? Do you consider his station or that of Mr Seacole the higher?' The peer spoke with asperity; but Claudia answered calmly.

'I consider his station,' said she, 'if he were once placed on a vantage-ground from which flight would be possible, to have no definite limit at all. The one is a country gentleman, and never can be more; the other may be anything to which ambition may impel, to which courage and resolve may lead, to which genius may soar. If I were his wife'— The peer started almost from his seat. 'Do not be alarmed, papa,' continued Claudia, with one of her most brilliant smiles, 'we are talking, you know, only hypothetically. If I were his wife, I should not be satisfied with being the mistress of a little country mansion, and, if Heaven so willed, the grateful mother of a booby to inherit it! My husband's name would be heard in more than the divisions; his voice, though soft and melodious, would ring through the House, and be listened to like a trumpet by the nation; he would not follow his fortune, but make it what he willed—and what she willed, papa, who whispered in his ear, not counsels, but suggestions to receive the stamp of fate from his intellect; or who sat silent at his feet, and looked up—up—to her husband as to a god!' Claudia did look up with her idolatrous eyes, and there was a nobleness in her expression at the moment which almost touched even the cold hard man of the world.

Can it be true that it is really woman's nature and destiny, as the Eastern apothegm asserts, to look up to somebody? If so, it might be easy to solve the mystery of Claudia's character, for till now she had never fallen in with a spirit at once stronger and purer than her own. She was too much behind the scenes in fashionable and political life, the only life she had ever known, to be deceived by its glitter and assumption. She had seen the actors off the stage, disrobed of that tinsel finery, and that rouge rubbed from their sickly cheeks, which had given them so much grandeur and beauty in the glare of the footlights. In Robert Oaklands she had beheld, for the first time in her life, intellectual power united with lofty principle; and not in contact—for here, alas, was the grand distinction!—with the low materialities of office and station.

'But come,' said she starting, 'let us turn for the present to the real and practical, for there is not a moment to lose. You must keep your word—you have now no excuse for breaking it, to say nothing of the dishonour; and the unexpected fulfilment even of a direct promise, will acquire a character of generosity sufficient to bind for ever to your interests an ally worth all the country squires in the kingdom.' It was with a very bad grace Lord Luxton consented; but his daughter had acquired a mastery over him which he could not resist, and he at length commenced the missive.

Claudia, in the meantime, proceeded to her interview with Adolphus, as if it had been part of the ordinary business of the day. Perhaps she was a little more abrupt than in ordinary business, for she could not trust implicitly to her father; and even while listening

to a proposal of marriage, her ears were engaged in the additional task of watching lest any unauthorised footsteps should pass down the stairs. The peer, however, proved to be a man of his word, for he knew whom he had to deal with; and he was all the more likely to be honest on this occasion from the circumstance of Claudia cutting the little affair she had on hand so short, that although it terminated in the way Adolphus wished, it was with a flushed face and an imprecation at the tip of his tongue he rejoined his friend in the street.

The note written by Lord Luxton was in the proper form; but when Claudia was determined to do a thing, she did it thoroughly, and in this case she added one from herself of a more private nature, and enclosed it in the same envelope. She then rung for Mr Slopper, whom she in some sort honoured with her confidence, as he was her ordinary attendant with the carriage, and committing the letter to his charge, gave him strict injunctions to deliver it immediately into the hands of him to whom it was addressed.

'Stay,' added she, 'there is still abundance of time; but if you choose to ride, there is money. Only take care for your life that no accident delays the delivery of this letter beyond five o'clock!' Claudia then bade her father good-by till dinner.

When Lord Luxton was alone, he brooded with growing vexation upon the circumstances in which he was placed. The conduct of Claudia seemed to him to border upon insanity; and so new was the idea of her forming an attachment entirely irrespective of interest and ambition, that he almost conceived it to be some morbid illusion dependent upon the state of her bodily health. But what if the young man—this young man who treats me with so much insolent contempt—does attain to the position from which she fancies he may arrive at greatness!—the idea that suggested itself here was so wild, that the peer started from his chair in terror. I will delay that letter, thought he, at all hazards, if it be still possible. Let five o'clock strike before it is delivered, and I am safe. Claudia herself, when she recovers, will thank me; and if she does not, she can hardly find much fault with so natural an accident. He rung.

'Send Slopper here.'

'He has gone out on an errand, my lord.'

'The other, then: I want to send after him.'

'He has gone out with the carriage, my lord.' The peer gave a growl of vexation. 'I think Mr Poring, my lord,' added the man, 'knows where Slopper has gone to.'

'Who is Mr Poring?'

'I beg pardon, my lord—Poring, Mr Seacole's man. He brought a note from Mrs Seacole, which he was to deliver immediately into Miss Falcontower's hand, and I heard him tell Slopper on the steps that he would follow and walk down with him.'

'Send him here.' The very man! thought Lord Luxton: he is the enemy of Oaklands—so Claudia said of his master, and, judging by the falsehoods respecting the fellow's origin, so say I of the man.

'You could overtake Slopper?' said he, when Mr Poring entered.

'I think I could, my lord.'

'He is carrying a letter to the Home Office, which, on second thoughts, I wish delayed a little. Perhaps I may speak to you on the subject again, for I want to make some further inquiry respecting Mr Oaklands before altogether committing myself in his favour. The letter must be delayed till past five o'clock. If you can manage this without mentioning my name to Slopper, so much the better, for all servants have not your discretion: but mention or not mention, the letter must be delayed. You may want to take some refreshment together—there is money.'

'Soh!' thought Mr Poring, as he strode more

rapidly than usual, but as noiselessly, down the stairs—'a sovereign from Lord Luxton!—then the service is of consequence. And no names mentioned!—then it is confidential between me and him. And that Boy is to be kept out of the Home Office—that Boy as found me on the Common—and made an image of me in wood—and set Mrs Margery against me—and carried it on to this day, till she has refused to be the landlady of a house where the lower classes is not admitted, and kept by Mr Joshua Poring, in gold letters a foot long and more, with the mister left out. If Mr Slopper don't do as I would have him, I'll know the reason why!'

Mr Poring walked with great strides, that answered to the running of an ordinary man, to the Chequers, in the immediate neighbourhood, but conveniently situated round a corner. The parlour was a good-sized room, with oblong tables parallel with the walls, of rich mahogany French polished. Each table was furnished with several circular slides for the beer-pots, also of rich mahogany French polished, and below, on the floor, an equal number of spittoons to match. The room was throughout clean, bright-looking, uniform, and to Mr Poring's thinking the very moral of a parlour where the lower classes is not admitted; but on the present occasion, indulging in only a single sweeping glance, he went up to the mantle-piece, and took the trouble to put back the clock a considerable portion of an hour. On turning round he found that he was not alone. An individual was sitting in a corner behind the door, dozing over the morning paper, and turning a dreaming unobservant eye upon the operations of Mr Poring.

'Mr Driftwood!' said that gentleman—'glad to have the pleasure of seeing you. We are slow in this house, I think—by me,' and he drew forth, by a handsome mosaic chain that looked as well as gold, a silver watch.

'I don't know,' replied the artist; 'my rascally boy has taken mine to clean, and I could not get hold of him this morning to ascertain where it is. Mr Slopper was asking for you just now.'

'And is he gone?' said Mr Poring, starting.

'No, here he is.' Mr Slopper hereupon entered with a small pewter measure of a colourless liquid, and a single shallow glass.

'That won't do, Mr Slopper,' said Mr Poring; 'it is some days since we have drunk together, and I vote for a couple of regular tumblers of cold without—at my expense.'

'I'm obleeged, Mr Poring,' replied Mr Slopper; 'but I must be at Downing Street before five, and it ain't the thing to walk fast: it don't look well in us who is used to carriage exercise.'

'No more it don't; we must draw a line, as you say; but you see you couldn't spin it out to half-past four, if you was to crawl like a fly in treacle, and I want to talk to you about a house I'm a-thinking of.' Mr Slopper, on turning his eyes to the clock, was surprised to find it so much earlier than he had supposed; and accordingly the little measure was exchanged for two goes of cold without.

But the eyes of Claudia were upon her messenger: they rarely left him indeed till her high behests were accomplished, and on this occasion she had been more emphatic in her orders than usual. He was to beware of accident for his life; these were her words, and although he did not exactly fancy that he ran any risk of a violent death in the event of failure, the penalty seemed to his imagination, from its very shapelessness, to be quite as bad. He accordingly drank his gin and water with great gulps, and got up before Mr Poring, who was in an uncommonly affable and comfortable humour, had half finished his.

'Well, Mr Slopper,' said the latter, when he found that everything else was in vain, 'I think you will sit down and be agreeable, and let me call for another,

when I tell you that I have only been going a little game with you. The fact is, the letter is in favour of that Boy—him they call Oaklands'—

'I know that, Mr Poring; do you think I haven't both eyes and ears for what is going on, more especially when people is in a flurry and speaks like actors on the stage?'

'Well, well, but you see his lordship, on second thoughts, wants to make some more inquiry first; and so he said to me, says he, Mr Poring, if you would be so obliging as to go after Slopper, says he, and stop the letter for an hour or two, till after five, says he, I should take it kind. In course I replied affably, and there's no more about it.'

'Ay, but there is!' said Mr Slopper, settling his hat on his head. 'You don't know nothing, Mr Poring, about the political conundrums of our family—of what we call the balance of power. Lord Luxton! Pooh, pooh! Our miss is worth two of the governor any day; and it was her who told me not to be later than five o'clock for my life!—So if you'll walk, thank ye; if not, I have the honour'—

'You are an ignorant person, Mr Slopper,' said Mr Poring, rising with dignity; 'you can know nothing about the Sally-law, or you would not talk of a gal being worth two of a lord. Since you won't attend to the head of the family what pays you your salary, give me the letter!'

'Give you the letter! Here's a go! My eye! I wouldn't give the letter to his lordship in person without the orders of Miss.'

'Don't put me to taking it from you, Mr Slopper, for I should be sorry to hurt you: but you see, I have promised Lord Luxton, who has a right to order what he pleases about his own letters, and I mean to keep my promise.'

'Come, come, Mr Poring, no nonsense of that kind. Hurt me! Why, I could tie a knot on you any day, for as stiff as you are; and the two men approached close to each other, Mr Slopper flushed and indignant, and Mr Poring imperturbably calm.

'What does it all mean, I say,' said the former, 'are you a-going to rob me?'

'I'm a-going to punch your head presently, if you have spirit enough for it.'

'I have spirit enough to serve your turn, and a good few to spare. But I won't have no punching of heads—the chest must do the business. I couldn't afford it. Miss likes everything that's handsome; and she wouldn't on no account have me looking at her with an eye that seemed as if blowed up with gunpowder, and a cheek like a monkey's with a couple of walnuts in it.'

'You are right,' said Mr Poring candidly, 'blackened eyes is gone down to the lower classes. You are a thoughtful and respectable man, Mr Slopper; and I'll punch your chest and stomach, and have a try at your collar-bone, and we'll see what comes of it.'

'Gentlemen, gentlemen!' cried the landlord, hurrying into the room—'surely this is not friendly! Would you make a row in my very parlour, and endanger my licence?'

'But it's honour, Mr Jolter—what are we to do?'

'Why, if you must go to work, isn't there the yard? How could I know anything about it if two gentlemen chose to meet promiscuous in the back settlements, and if Jim the potboy picked up one of 'em, and Taproom Tom dandled the other? But go out separate, and turn away your flushed face, Mr Slopper, when you are passing the bar.' The advice was taken instantly; and no wonder, for Mr Jolter looked like a stout justice of the peace, and his hat might have covered handsomely any number of thousands a year you could name.

Jim, the potboy, was a little old man, lame, but able-bodied. He had never been anything he could

remember but a potboy at the Chequers, and was regarded as one of the fixtures. Taproom Tom, who presently made his appearance, with a dirty towel under his arm, had been for many years in the situation of a servant out of place. He was dressed in a faded livery, consisting of a green cutaway-coat, reaching below the calves of his legs, with yellow facings, knee-breeches of no colour in particular, and white neckcloth and stockings in a state of chronic dirtiness, that had never been known to change either for better or worse. Tom succeeded about once a year in obtaining a place, but kept it only for a few days, when he was discharged for fighting in the kitchen; upon which he drifted back naturally to the Chequers, where he served in the taproom from taste, and was much liked on account of his quietness and civility. It was tacitly understood that he was to get a plate of victuals now and then from the house, and be permitted to drink as often as the guests invited him; so that, upon the whole, Tom did not lose much by the loss of his place.

But these two were not the only spectators who had assembled. It is surprising how information of an interesting nature percolates. The back-wall of the yard was very soon swarming with coachmen and stablemen from the mews behind; several gentlemen's servants were shewing their heads above the side-walls; and from all a buzz of criticism arose when the combatants stripped, or, in technical language, peeled to the waist. Mr Slopper was a well-coloured man, in comfortable condition, but not flabby. He had some good flesh and blood covering his bones, and looked as if he would take a considerable quantity of mauling before you got well into his ribs. His hands, however—termed by the learned of a former day bunches of fives—were the grand feature. They were immense hands; and when doubled up and wielded by a tall stout individual like Mr Slopper, appeared to be fit to bring down an ox. Mr Poring was a spare, angular man, of a bluish-gray colour. He looked like a porringer you might break but couldn't bruise; and being apparently built, like a Chinese-junk, in compartments—probably square—even if broken, it would be only a local chip, not a general smash. Five to four on Poring, and takers shy.

The battle, although exciting to the critical spectators, would hardly awaken much interest in these pages; and more especially, as it was prolonged interminably by the slowness of Mr Poring. When Mr Slopper came down, which he did several times, he sat only for an instant on the motherly knee of Jim the potboy, and was on his legs again like a good one; but Mr Poring never could be prevailed upon to front him till time was just on the eve of being up. At length that gentleman—who had been chipped in almost all his compartments—received a mighty punch full on the pit of the stomach which, for the first time, brought him down like a steeple: and he sat for a moment, as unconsciously as a baby, on the knee of Taproom Tom, who held him with the tenderness of a wet-nurse. At this moment a church clock struck, and Mr Poring sprang up, with a grin half of pain half of triumph.

'It is five o'clock, Mr Slopper!' said he, 'you may take your letter as soon as you please. I don't want no more of this—do you?'

'I'm obleeged, Mr Poring,' replied Mr Slopper; 'and since you are satisfied, so am I. As for the letter, it is in the proper hands by this time, I have no doubt—per favour of Mr Driftwood!' Mr Poring looked as if he would have sunk again into the arms of Taproom Tom; but collecting himself, he put on his clothes, and walked his aching bones off the field of battle. Mr Jolter, without making any allusion to the scene in the yard, presented the two gentlemen as they went out with a glass of brandy, of which Mr Slopper declared himself much the better; while Mr Poring emptied his glass without uttering a word, and walked

stiffly homewards, looking as if he was discoursing inwardly in the strain of our army in Flanders.

He would have been somewhat comforted, however, had he known of Mr Driftwood's adventures. The unfortunate artist, in his generous eagerness to serve his friend, after walking some distance, became nervous as to time, and called a cab. The horse was slow, the cabman crusty, and to complete the calamity, a Teetotal procession thought fit to block up the street for a considerable time. Driftwood jumped out in despair, dived into the crowd, and like Milton's fiend,

With head, hand, wings, or foot, pursued his way.

He was at length at Charing Cross; he was beyond Whitehall; a clock struck with a deep sonorous tone—Oh, to see the dial of the Horse Guards!—but it was hidden by the projecting parts of the building, and he could only count the strokes, his heart sinking at every clang: one—two—three—four—five!

COLONIES IN LONDON.

STRANGERS and temporary visitors in London are given to divide the huge Babylon into two great sections, which, under the general denominations of the East End and the West End, are supposed to represent—this, the world of wealth, of aristocratic descent, of high breeding, and of fashion; that, the world of commerce and industry, and of unfashionable struggles for competence and independence, or the bare necessities of life. Such a general division is convenient enough for common purposes; but in both the hemispheres, if such they may be termed, of the great metropolitan world, there are numberless distinct and separate classes and orders settled down among the indiscriminate mass of population, with whom they mingle only to a certain extent, and who are as plainly discernible by the man of observation, as any other of the social phenomena which give its peculiar character to the Great City. These classes and orders, it will suit our present purpose to designate as colonists—and such they may be regarded in several points of view. Most of them have come to town, urged by the same impulse which weekly drives thousands to the diggings of California or Australia. Their object being the same as that of the general army of workers, it would seem strange that they do not become speedily fused in the mass, and undistinguishable from them: such, however, is not the case. From some cause or other, or probably from many causes operating together, there is a sort of clan-like tendency, not always to be accounted for on the principle of mutual interest or mutual support, which congregates the emigrants from specified distant localities, the professors of certain arts, or the workers at certain trades or species of labour, in districts which they, in a manner, appropriate to themselves from one generation to another.

The most remarkable colony in all London is no doubt that of the silk-weavers, who, driven over here by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, have monopolised a portion of the area of Spitalfields for a period of 160 years. Their clanship, however, is owing to causes sufficiently obvious, and needs no explanation. Let us glance now at some of the many associated tribes whose circumstances and antecedents afford no such reason for their isolation, more or less complete, from the masses amid which they dwell.

Scattered here and there among the more modest of the approaches to G— Square, will be found a colony of respectable tradesmen, whose foreign names glittering in gold letters over their shops, proclaim their continental origin. Their broken English, lisped in bland whispers, and their extravagant politeness of gesticulation in the presence of an aristocratic customer, there can be little doubt, serve as excellent auxiliaries to

trade. The bulk of their business lies with the upper classes, and they supply well-nigh the entire demands of the household, and likewise no small profusion of luxuries for the table and adornments for the person. Their first floors, during the season, are the abodes of provincial members of parliament, and the younger brothers of the aristocracy—captains in the Guards, and embryo nabobs in course of rustication—fortune-hunting adventurers, polite gamblers, and diners-out of the loftiest grade. Their attics are the studios and sanctums of unknown artists, rising professors, and the neophytes of dental surgery and chiropodal science: and in their garrets lie up in ordinary a whole regiment of valets, couriers, dragomans, butlers, stewards, and gentlemen's gentlemen, with their indispensable collaterals of the *beau sexe*, all from La belle France, Fatherland, the hills of Switzerland, or the plains of sunny Italy—and all waiting, with such patience as dwells in the hearts of exiles, till a new patron shall engage their invaluable services. Who are these respectable housekeepers who exercise such comprehensive hospitality, and thrive so well under the genial smile of Old England's nobility? Shall we be guilty of any breach of etiquette or good faith in revealing a fact which, so far from being a discredit to them, exalts them into an example to others? They are almost to a man the discharged servants of the travelling aristocracy, brought hither by their masters, by means of whose liberal and well-deserved patronage and recommendation, they are on the road to competence. They offer a curious contrast to the retiring English manservant, who, if he invest his savings in business at all, is pretty sure to do so in the purchase of a public-house, but who has too often no savings to invest in anything.

Not far from the above provident colony, but nearer to the supposed boundary-line separating the two worlds of East and West, we come upon a quiet district, where fashion does not disdain to be seen either in equipage or on foot, where dwell in amicable juxtaposition the working, but not the exhibiting, professors of those arts and accomplishments in which fashion must excel or cease to be. To play upon the guitar, to fence, to speak in polyglott, to enunciate bravuras or buffas to a miracle, it is necessary to become the *élève* of Senhor Fernando, of Monsieur Angelo, of Herr Vielsprach, of Signior Sollado. These pilous, pale-faced, and dark-eyed gentlemen are to the intellect of fashion what the milliner and tailor are to its bodily shape; they bedeck and adorn it *à-la-mode*, and render the inner man or woman presentable in select circles. The spirit of rivalry, never so rampant with professors as with men of commerce, seems almost unknown to this order of continental settlers among us. They are invariably friendly with each other—Englishmen of the same class being as invariably estranged, if not hostile—and are often known to refuse a pupil discontented with a brother professor, and to allege as a reason that they cannot themselves boast of superior qualifications.

A different colony of foreigners—for the most part—is that which radiates round a circle, of which the Great Globe in Leicester Square is the centre. It would take ten times the space that we propose to occupy in this paper, to set forth the extraordinary merits of the multi-faced and multi-moustached tribe who have settled down in this neighbourhood, as in a spot affording peculiar facilities for the practice of a species of industry better described in the vocabulary of the swell-mob than in that in common use. Here and hereabouts are to be met with the fugitives who have fled from the police of half Europe—the scum and offscourings of Paris and Berlin; the scamps of Rome and Madrid and Vienna; the 'posted' cheats of Baden-Baden; the swindlers of all nations mingled together with the most dashing desperadoes of our own, who,

assuming the garb and the language of foreigners, swagger in masquerade before the eyes of the myrmidons of justice, and defy detection. They may be compared to a shoal of sharks ravenous for prey, and ready at any moment to rend in pieces any unfortunate voyager silly enough to trust himself to the seductions of the elements in which they move. They were once the recognised and privileged jackals of the numerous hells which skirt the western limits of their lair; but, from some cause or other—probably because there was too little of the jackal, and too much of a roaring lion in their composition—they have been unanimously kicked out of Pandemonium, whose golden gates are now barred against them. That, however, matters little: let but half-a-dozen of them meet together, and there is a hell, with Mammon in the midst, and Moloch not far off. Divested of all that makes humanity human, they trample scornfully upon its tenderest ties and most sacred obligations; they make a mock of ruin, and a jest of death. In their vocabulary, despair, and suicide, and perdition are resolved into slang phrases, provocative of such mirth and such laughter as would make innocent gaiety shrink aghast with horror. The honour that dwells among thieves is banished from their brotherhood: in default of victims from without, they betray and rifle each other, and no man is fool enough to rely upon his fellow. Their career is probably brief enough; but their ranks are supplemented by the victims they sacrifice, who become in their turn the relentless ravagers of fresh prey; and their calling is, moreover, the last refuge of every desperate dare-devil to whom the means of luxurious and sensual indulgence is the breath of life.

Let us turn to another foreign colony of a more pleasing aspect. On various parts of the beaten track in which commerce chiefly runs, are situated the well-known Arcades, the several shrines to which the London children make such constant and such willing pilgrimages. These are mostly inhabited by Germans and French, the former in the greatest number. Marvelous museums they are, especially to infant girls and boys. Every shop is a mountain of wonders, and there is a whole chain of mountains on either side of the way, so that the spectator walks in a literal ravine of toys and knickknacks, and useful and ornamental implements. This colony is the very antithesis of the last described. Here we see ten thousand evidences of patient and unwearied industry, united occasionally with no small amount of artistic talent, employed in the unremitting endeavour to earn the smallest pecuniary guerdon ever bestowed upon labour honestly exerted. Here are the results of the long winter-nights of the peasant-shepherds and cattle-tenders of the Black Forest, visible in elaborate, and often very clever carvings of wild or domestic animals, a whole flock of which may be bought for a trifling sum. Here are musical instruments good enough for the tyro, honestly made and scientifically tuned, to be had for the small sum that lingers in the school-boy's pocket after stuffing at the confectioner's, or for the 6d. or 9d. which the errand-boy saves out of his weekly wages; and besides all that delights and fascinates the eye of childhood, is a long catalogue of articles in hourly use, fashioned in a style that puts our home-manufacturers of such trifles to the blush, and sold at a price at which they cannot yet compete. Lying out of the swarming thoroughfares in retired and covered spots, these repositories of everything useful, amusing, and cheap, have gradually made a reputation for themselves, and would be sought out and encouraged were they to migrate from their present appropriate quarters, and pitch in any part of the city. It may be that but few of this class of colonists sleep among their multitudinous gatherings, and that they have their homes elsewhere; but the Arcades are their colonial settlements.

We need do no more than advert to the German sugar-baking colony which has taken possession of a

part of Whitechapel, where their places of worship have sprung up around them, and where they preserve their language and many of their Fatherland customs in the midst of strangers. The Italian colony of music-grinders and image-boys which congregates amid the slums of Leather Lane and Liquorpond Street, is also tolerably well known to the observer of London-life, and demands no description at our hands. The Jews, too, who colonise every country under the face of heaven, and who in London principally affect the region of St Mary Axe and the tributaries of Houndsditch, but who are to be found wherever money is to be made—and who, with still greater certainty, are not to be found where nothing is to be got by attendance—may on this occasion be passed over, while we turn our attention for a moment to one or two of the industrial colonies of our own countrymen which may be found worthy of a passing notice.

The first of these that suggests itself is the old brokers' colony of Broker Row, running from Drury Lane towards the Seven Dials. Until within the last few years, such another collection of chairs, tables, beds, bookcases, wardrobes, carpets, floor-cloths, desks, drawers, going clocks and gone pianofortes, was not to be met with in the whole circumference of the metropolis. There are now, however, rival colonies of the kind, though none in all respects so complete or venerable. A passing stranger might imagine that these roomy receptacles were merely shops for the sale of second-hand goods: if, however, he have occasion to explore one of them in search of any commodity coming under the denomination of furniture—and no matter what it is, he will be sure to find it—he will come out with a different notion. It may chance that he will be led through a wilderness of chambers, ranging from cellar to roof, each crammed to the ceiling with every variety of manufacture into which mahogany can be shaped; and he will have carefully to sidle his way towards the desiderated article, which perhaps lies buried ten feet deep under a complication of legs, wings, rungs, and flaps, through which he is politely requested to take a telescopic view of it, 'because it ain't no use my pullin' of it out if so be you don't think o' buyin'.' In one or other of these rooms, perhaps in several, he will find one or more superannuated cabinet-makers' journey-men, themselves much in need of repairs, busy with saw, plane, glue-pot, and French polish, patching up and turning out as new for the fiftieth time articles that were worn out last century. In London, where every hobbyhorse is ridden full gallop, odd tastes and predilections are indulged, such as are scarcely heard of elsewhere; one of these we take to be the passion for second-hand goods. There is a class, a very small minority, it is true, to whom novelty is an abomination, and who will not submit to it, if it is to be avoided. An occasional visit to Broker Row is indispensable to persons of this class, who appear to value their household goods in the ratio of the household labour bestowed upon them. They regard French polish as an imposture, and prefer paying a round price for an article fifty years old because it has had fifty years' elbow-grease to boast of. On our remarking lately to a tradesman in this locality, that he was extravagant in the article of oil-cloth, having laid it down wherever it was possible to find room for it—'Sir,' said he, 'I sell three times this quantity in a year, but I never sell a yard new. I buy it new, and lay it down here for a few months to take the shine off, and sell it at a good profit afterwards.' The brokers' colony is probably a real convenience to the public, who, when in haste to furnish, may do so without the pains of wandering far and wide in search of the materials.

Analogous to the above in some respects is the colony of doers and undoers and dealers in pictures, who, for the last forty years at least, have held almost undisputed

possession of W— Street and its adjacent precincts stretching away beyond Soho. How many times Titian has been skinned, Jordaens pumice-stoned, and Rembrandt baked in this shabby Walhalla, let the officiating ministers declare if they will. They are a remarkably candid and simple-hearted set of men, and exceedingly communicative on matters of art—but fallible sometimes, like ordinary mortals, and liable to make trifling mistakes in the allocation of proper names—so that it may be wise to verify their dicta now and then by corroborative testimony. They are the true and potential Spirit-rappers of the day: the dead-and-gone geniuses of the buried ages wait at their beck and are obedient to their summons. Raphael himself must respond if the W— Street Medium cite him to his bar; nor dares Michael Angelo refuse. Under their talismanic influence, the sepulchred favourites of pope and cardinal astonish the world of to-day with fresh marvels of art, never seen before, yet palpably cracking and crumbling beneath the touch of time, till armed to defy his scythe by applications of modern skill. The world of London, and indeed of all England besides, owes an immense deal to W— Street. But for the considerate ministrations of its disinterested denizens, how many private galleries throughout the country, now rich in specimens of the Italian, Spanish, and Flemish masters, had wanted even a single sample of the great schools! Nor are the dead artists themselves less beholden to them, seeing that but for their supernatural powers of multiplication, many a modest genius whose fame might never have extended beyond the confined district that gave him birth—or the pages of Pilkington—now enjoys an English reputation, and hangs in honourable company (if by proxy, what matter?) beneath many a lordly roof. Time was when the colonists of W— Street wanted in wealth, when purvey ignorance, seeking enlightenment in the liberal arts, paid generously for the practical lessons it received—but the glory of the place has been latterly under eclipse; a spirit of vainglorious conceit has got possession of the students and connoisseurs of art, who, affecting now to be as wise as their teachers, disburse but charily for the few hints they condescend to receive. May the colony be restored to an honourable standing, and thrive henceforth as it deserves!

Away to the river-side, shadowed with the hulls and masts of vessels—not to that amphibious colony which, lining both banks, takes in Stepney and Rotherhithe, Wapping and Deptford, where all that greets the eye and the nose 'doth suffer a sea-change'—but for a glance at the colony of coal-whippers, whose history claims a brief notice here. The millions of tons of coal which London periodically consumes, are served out to the public by the agency of the coal-whippers, who have pitched with their wives and families along the margin of the Thames, where the colliers are moored. They are a stout and brawny race, who look upon two hundredweights as a sort of natural knapsack not to be grumbled at. They are from no particular district, but selected, for muscular reasons, for the performance of a species of labour to which every gentleman is not competent. They have stringent laws for the regulation of their industry, which, though it is of a very repulsive description, is more than usually lucrative; and it is rare indeed that a man once fairly entered in this profession ever leaves it willingly, so long as he is capable of doing the work. They are, however, too many of them, fanatics in their devotion to beer; and their zeal in the cause of Sir John Barleycorn betrayed them and their affairs into the power of the publicans, who, for many years, virtually managed their entire concerns, receiving and paying their wages, and engaging or discharging their services as they chose, and, of course, displaying that disinterestedness which is the publican's characteristic. With the priest of the hoghead for a paymaster, and

with wages more than doubly sufficient for a poor man's household to receive, the coal-whipper soon grew into a mere drinking-machine—a walking, staggering conduit for treble X. If, from any cause, his powers of imbibition relaxed, he ran the risk of sudden discharge; a fit of sobriety was an unpardonable act of treachery, and avenged with summary ejection. Nay, a mere gallon-man, whose puny thirst was slaked with eight pints a day, was hourly in danger of being supplanted by any candidate who was blessed with the capability of swallowing sixteen, and was discharged, too, when the double-gallon man sued for admission to the ranks. The merits of the labourer were measured by the capacity of his throat; and he who could carry coal under the most liquor ranked first in the scale. This truly infernal system was maintained in operation for many years, to the ruin of numbers of its victims, and the misery of their families. The plundered party at length found courage to petition the legislature; and after the customary course of committees and blue-books, an act was passed emancipating them from the oppressive sense of obligation under which they laboured, and leaving them at liberty to pay their vows at their favourite shrine at their own freewill.

We find ourselves in danger of exceeding all reasonable limits by extending our colonial survey—and though there are other town colonies which would repay the trouble of a brief inspection, we can but hint at a few of them, which the reader can explore for himself when the opportunity occurs. There is the publishers' colony in Paternoster Row, of which all the world knows something at least. There is the aristocratic colony of Belgravia, of which the greater part of the world know very little, and where those who want practical information may hire a very comfortable house for a trifle of £2000 a year, and be in a condition to make observations on the spot. Not far from it there is a thieves' colony in Westminster, where a peripatetic practitioner may find accommodation for a less sum than it costs the Belgravian to keep his knocker clean. There is a colony of clubs in St James's, and a colony of bludgeons in St Giles's and White-chapel. There are several colonies of lawyers in quiet retreats which litigants are perfectly familiar with; and there are various small colonies of students and scholars grouped round hospitals, colleges, and the university. There is the stockbrokers' colony near the Exchange, and the stags' colony in Capel Court. There are shipbrokers' colonies along the river's brink, and colonies of outfitters on Tower Hill and all round the docks. There is Mincing Lane colony, and Mark Lane colony, and the Custom-house colony—each characterised by separate and distinct species of the money-getting genus. There is a colony of artists in the region of Newman Street and Rathbone Place, and a colony of jewellers in Clerkenwell. There are trade colonies without number, where birds of the same feather, artisans of the same craft, flock together as to a market for labour; and, lastly, there is an indefinite number of little provincial colonies, assembling only at night in public-houses, where the news from 'home, sweet home,' may be read in the Falmouth local journal or the gazette from Northumberland, and be discussed by the listeners in the long-remembered dialect of their native places. These country inns, if we may so call them, are generally kept by emigrants from the provinces, and serve to keep alive a sort of clannish feeling, and to preserve old associations and friendships among inhabitants of the same place. In this way, nearly every county in England, and most of the large towns both in England and Scotland, are represented in London.

We are not aware that in any other capital in Europe such a remarkable result of the gregarious tendencies of human nature could be found as the metropolitan colonies exhibit. Much of it, no doubt, could be traced to the obstinate class-feeling for which

England is proverbial, and which foreigners, not altogether without reason, regard as a blot upon the national character; but more of it, we are inclined to think, originates in necessity or self-interest, and is the fruit of that experience which has taught the Londoner how he may best minister to both. The phenomenon is one, at any rate, upon which it is not uninteresting to speculate.

THE NIGHT OF THE POETS.

POETS are a sort of interpreters of nature, seeing what others see not, and understanding what totally escapes the comprehension of their neighbours. One of their propensities is that of strolling abroad when the rest of the world are at supper or in bed, to watch the singular aspects of the night, which appears to have been originally made for their especial use and pleasure. We mean to interrogate these wanderers in darkness, in order, if possible, to discover what the notions are which they entertain of the ebon goddess. If egotism were permitted to persons writing in prose, we would say that we ourselves have a peculiar theory about her, which it may not be unpleasant to compare with that prevailing among the children of the Muses.

Most persons, whether they acknowledge it or not, experience a sort of uneasy sensation when left alone with the night. The reason is, that nature has not bestowed upon them that particular sort of lamp which, like the cat's eyes, enables a few favoured individuals to stroll perfectly at their ease over the surface of the earth, in the absence of the sun and moon. It is no merit of theirs that they feel no fear in what is darkness to others. For them, the world contains no such thing as darkness; they can always see well enough to discover the soft, placid, meek features of Night, who throws aside her thick veil to amuse them, and, opening her large tranquil eyes, enables them to look at will into the very depths of her soul. Instead of pitying them, therefore, we should rather envy them their profound delight when, taking leave of gas and Price's composite, they roam away with the eldest sister of Chaos into the glimmering fields.

Half the enjoyment we experience on such occasions depends, however, upon two things, which, unhappily, are not always in our power: we mean a balmy atmosphere and wild and romantic scenery. We are almost tempted to add a third condition—rich and musical names, steeped, if possible, in historical associations. There are some syllables so crabbed, so tough, so inflexible, so vulgar, that the whole nine Muses, if they were set about it in concert, would not be able to domiciliate them in the world of poetry. There are others which of themselves, wheresoever and by whomsoever pronounced, make at once a picture upon the mind—Verona, Fiesoli, Vallambrosa! Do they not sink in liquid softness upon the ear, and slide, we know not how, into the soul, rippling and overshadowing its surface like the west wind, when perfumed by the breath of violets in spring?

With respect to night-landscapes, it may be predicated generally, that they are infinitely grander than any we behold by day. Even the most common-place city, when its noises have been stilled and its thoroughfares cleared by the darkness, presents a succession of striking pictures to the fancy, as we wander through it. But in the gorges of mountains, in rocky glens, in forests, and among cliffs and precipices, on the sea-shore—if favoured by the moon streaming upon through rents in the clouds—we see the earth invested with a splendour and magnificence which even poetry, with all its resources, fails adequately to represent.

But let us not murmur because there are things in nature which surpass the imitative powers of art. The poets have done much to give permanence to the

fleeting beauties of the night. Let us accept the offerings which they have poured into the treasury of fancy, and examine them one by one, as chance brings them to our hand. Coleridge, it may be presumed, from the dreaminess of his character, was tolerably well qualified to draw sketches of Nature, when, with starry diadem and mantle of sable, she walks the world in majesty.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock;

The night is chilly, but not dark;
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind and at the full,
And yet she looks both small and dull.
The night is chill—the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the spring comes slowly up this way.

In this passage, there are perhaps more suggestions than pictures. Superstition was a large element in the imagination of Coleridge. He was essentially unclassical. All the poetry of his nature was connected by imperceptible links with the indefinite mythology of the north, and hence, perhaps, the strong hold he possesses over the minds of the English people. He is not content with delineating the external features of heaven or earth, but appears to draw aside a corner of the material veil, and afford us glimpses of the ideas which revolve through the obscurity behind it. Some indications of this are discoverable in almost every passage in which he speaks of the night. Thus in the *Ancient Mariner* :—

We listened, and looked sideways up;
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip.
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

And the coming wind did wax more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan!

Of the *Ancient Mariner*, the informing principle is superstition; but in others of Coleridge's pieces we find descriptions of the night without this accompaniment.

Mild splendour of the various-crested night!
Mother of wildly-working visions! hail!
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil;
And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
Behind the gathered blackness lost on high;
And when thou dardest from the wind-rent cloud
Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky.
Ah, such is Hope! as changeful and as fair!
Now dimly peering on the wistful sight;
Now hid behind the dragon-winged despair:
But soon emerging in her radiant might,
She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
Sails like a meteor kindling in its flight.

It has, of course, been often remarked, that in nearly all the later poets, whether of Germany, France, or England, there prevails an air of melancholy, which infuses itself into their descriptions of nature, and imparts to them a sadness belonging in no degree to the originals. Into the philosophy of this subject we cannot here enter; but it may be observed by the way, that our civilisation has not hitherto proved either to society or to individuals the cause of so much happiness as seems from the first to have been expected. Profound discontent pervades a large portion of the thinking classes, and this feeling necessarily tinges the whole system of their ideas. Among our ancestors, as well as among nearly all ancient writers, there is far greater vivacity, playfulness, joy, and contentment. Their poetry, consequently, overflows with exhilaration, and puts people in good-humour, as well with things in general as with themselves. Let us, by way of illustration, select a moonlight scene from Shakspeare:—

Lorenzo. The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise; in such a night,
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul towards the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jessica. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew;
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismayed away.

Lorenzo. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jessica. In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lorenzo. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew;
And with an untrifling love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jessica. And in such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well;
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lorenzo. And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

Bring your music forth into the air.
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica: look, how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

Our great dramatist, as is well known, abounds with exquisite touches, which may suffice to suggest glorious images of the night; but he has nowhere indulged in anything like a finished picture. Where the lines occur, they are often full of beauty; but, separated from the context, and strung pell-mell together, they would scarce appear to do justice to the poet's thoughts. Yet they are always fresh and fragrant, and prolific of suggestions. For example:—

Lysander. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold.
To-morrow night, when Phæbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass
(A time that lovers' flight doth still conceal),
Through Athens' gates have we devised to steal.

Few poets, whether ancient or modern, have yielded themselves up to the fascinations of night more than Shelley. The too penetrating light of day disclosed to his melancholy eye more of the world's misery than he could bear to contemplate without anguish. He loved above all things, therefore, to steal forth and pursue

his thoughts in darkness. The crimes and irregularities of society were hidden from him then, while multitudes of brilliant and gorgeous fancies swept before him in endless and ever-varied processions:

How beautiful is night! the balmy sigh
Which vernal Zephyrs breathe in morning's ear,
Were descended to the speaking quietude
That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebon vault
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a canopy which love has spread
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills
Robed in a garment of untrodden snow:
Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend
So stainless that their white and glittering spires
Tinge not the moon's pure beam: yon castled steep,
Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
So idly that rapt fancy deemeth it
A metaphor of peace—all form a scene
Where musing solitude might love to lift
Her soul above this sphere of earthliness:
Where silence undisturbed might walk alone,
So cold, so bright, so still.

If we could perseveringly follow each poet through all his delineations, we should find in him a peculiar version, so to speak, of the night. Doubtless, every man paints whatever he looks at with the colours of his own idiosyncrasy. Nothing comes to us in its own inherent qualities, but simply as it appears to particular observers. Shelley had lived among the Alps, whose aspects and features he carefully studied, and sought frequently to paint. In *Alastor*, therefore, when we appear to be transported to the wildest solitudes of the Asiatic mountains, we are only placed among the rocks and glaciers, the chasms and waterfalls, the icy pinnacles of the Great St Bernard, Mont Blanc, or the Jungfrau:

At midnight

The moon arose: and lo! the ethereal cliffs
Of Caucasus, whose icy summits shone
Among the stars like sunlight, and around
Whose caverned base the whirlpools and the waves
Bursting and eddying irresistibly,
Rage and resound for ever.

In another poem, our fancy is again turned away to terrific solitudes, haunted by the spectral moon, whose rays are intercepted by exhalations as they struggle towards the earth:—

The dim and horned moon hung low, and poured
A sea of lustre on the horizon's verge
That overflowed its mountains—yellow mist
Filled the unbounded atmosphere, and drank
Wan moonlight e'en to fulness—not a star
Shone, not a sound was heard! the very winds—
Danger's grim playmates on that precipice—
Slept clasped in his embrace.

No one, perhaps, has attempted with more boldness than Shelley to paint the grandeur of a stormy night, when winds and clouds, and mingled brilliance and gloom, alternate or combine to impress a startling character upon the appearances of nature. The sky at night often seems to be a separate creation. Mountains, towering and dark, nod over immeasurable caverns; waterfalls stream over half the sky; rivers wind and glitter amid pearly banks; while huge animals, of shape more fantastic than the stuff of which our dreams are made, travel calmly over gulfs and abysses, with heads erect and forms enveloped in radiance. From the contemplation of phenomena such as these, Shelley had probably come warm when he threw upon paper the following strange picture:—

Where the irresistible storm had cloven
That fearful darkness, the blue sky was seen
Fretted with many a fair cloud interwoven
Most delicately, and the ocean green,

Beneath that opening spot of blue serene,
Quivered like burning emerald: calm was spread
On all below; but far on high, between
Earth and the upper air, the vast clouds fled,
Countless and swift as leaves on autumn's tempest shed.

For ever, as the war became more fierce
Between the whirlwinds and the rack on high,
That spot grew more serene: blue light did pierce
The woof of those white clouds which seemed to lie
Far deep and motionless; while through the sky
The pallid semicircle of the moon
Past on in slow and moving majesty;
The upper horn arrayed in mists, which soon
But slowly fled like dew beneath the beams of noon.
I could not choose but gaze; a fascination
Dwelt in that moon and sky and clouds, which drew
My fancy thither, and in expectation
Of what I knew not, I remained: the hue
Of the white moon, amid that heaven so blue,
Suddenly stained with shadow, did appear;
A speck, a cloud, a shape approaching grew,
Like a great ship in the sun's sinking sphere
Beheld afar at sea, and swift it came anear.

Keats, with all his richness of fancy, has accomplished comparatively little to illustrate the beauties of the night. He evidently felt its witchery, and occasionally, in his curious and quaint way, commemorates his admiration. But the world upon which he gazed was not the real one. He lived in fairy palaces scooped out in the depths of the earth, or arched over by the imaginations among the green waves of ocean. The moon and stars, and clouds and vapours, such as we usually behold them, were therefore things much too substantial for him. Here, however, is a picture from *Endymion*, which possesses inimitable softness and splendour:—

Methought I lay

Watching the zenith where the Milky-Way
Among the stars in virgin splendour pours;
And travelling my eye, until the doors
Of heaven appeared to open for my flight,
I became loath and fearful to alight
From such high soaring by a downward glance;
So kept me steadfast in that airy trance,
Spreading imaginary pinions wide—
When presently the stars began to glide
And faint away before my eager view;
At which I sighed that I could not pursue,
And dropped my vision to the horizon's verge:
And lo! from opening clouds I saw emerge
The loveliest moon that ever silvered o'er
A shell for Neptune's goblet: she did soar
So passionately bright, my dazzled soul,
Commingle with her argent spheres, did roll
Through clear and cloudy, even when she went
At last into a dark and vapoury tent—
Whereat methought the lidless-eyed train
Of planets all were in the blue again.

In roaming through the world of verse, we often find sweet patches, as it were, of description interspersed with thoughts and ideas which in themselves are not far removed from commonplace. In such cases, the best course is to tolerate the old for the sake of the new. Nearly all poets select the same topics around which to weave their fancies. The difference is in the treatment, and the more or less lavish splendour with which they are able to scatter about their imagery. Keats was peculiarly felicitous in this process of pouring vitality into ancient themes. His presence appears, as it moves along, to throw fresh colours on everything it approaches. His woods have a deeper gloom; his winds, a greater softness; his stars, a more jewelled sort of brightness than those of other poets; and this often in spite of very bad rhymes and very awkward phrases: but what is grotesque, we pardon in consideration of

what is tasteful and exquisite. Observe how, in discoursing of Hope, he interweaves delicious prospects of earth and sky:—

Where'er I wander, at the fall of night,
Where woven boughs shut out the moon's bright ray,
Should sad despondency my musings fright,
And frown to drive fair cheerfulness away;
Peep with the moonbeams through the leafy roof,
And keep that fiend, Despondence, far aloof.

And as, in sparkling majesty, a star
Gilds the bright summit of some gloomy cloud,
Brightening the half-veiled face of heaven afar;
So when dark thoughts my boding spirit shroud,
Sweet Hope! celestial influence round me shed,
Waving thy silver pinions o'er my head.

The several forms which poetry assumes in the minds of different men, are extremely difficult to be characterised or discriminated. When Milton was as young as Keats, he wrote in a style equally imaginative and equally fanciful: both his imagination and his fancy were kept within certain bounds by a severer taste acquired by the study of the Greek. Throughout his life, he seems to have experienced no little trouble in reigning in his ideas. Yet so refined was his sense of propriety, that he generally rejected every image, every simile, and every metaphor, not reconcilable with the stern decisions of his poetical philosophy. For this reason, his works often appear too artistic. The exuberances of nature have obviously been pruned away, but what remains when you carefully study it, seems only the more majestic and beautiful for the operation. He is called upon many times to speak of night. But his is not the night of a fluttered and bewildered fancy, but a picture of the vast universe divested of the illusions of the sun. A calm glory breathes over the face of nature; and solemn music, as if descending from the highest heaven, sweeps through the soul as we gaze and listen. Never did language move with a loftier port or grandeur than in the poems of this blind old man, who had familiarised himself with the inmost secrets of versification, until the words in which he clothed his ideas became, to borrow his own expression—

A linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton maze and giddy cunning.

Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony.

But when we enter the mighty creation of the *Paradise Lost*, and seek to detach passages that may represent the beauty and magnificence of the whole, we find it as impossible as to present a suit of chain-armour by taking out and exhibiting a single link. The merit lies in the unity, in the symmetry, in the proportion. Yet we must entreat the Muse of Paradise for leave to transfer a few passages from the immortal volume to our own pages; and first, let us take a glimpse of fairies sporting by moonlight:—

Fairy elves,

Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course: they on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.

Contrast with this another picture of night, strongly similar, yet how different:—

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad:
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
Were slunk; all but the wakeful nightingale—
She all night long her amorous descant sung.

Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament
 With living sapphires; Hesperus that led
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

It has often been observed, that the great poets of antiquity devote very little of their works to description. With one short glowing word or phrase, they bring out the very soul of a landscape; and having fixed it in your memory for ever, pass on. This is peculiarly the case with Pindar and Sophocles, who invest with luminous ether a few favourite spots in ancient Greece. Homer is sometimes more diffuse; and on one occasion pauses, in a playful mood, to describe a moonlight scene, which latter altogether it would be difficult to rival:—

As when the moon, refulgent lamp of night,
 O'er heaven's clear azure spreads her sacred light,
 When not a breath disturbs the deep serene,
 And not a cloud o'ercasts the solemn scene—
 Around her throne the vivid planets roll,
 And stars unnumbered gild the glowing pole;
 O'er the dark trees a yellower verdure shed,
 And tip with silver every mountain's head;
 Then shine the vales, the rocks in prospect rise;
 A flood of glory bursts from all the skies;
 The conscious swains, rejoicing in the sight,
 Eye the blue vault, and bless the useful light;
 So many flames before proud Ilium blaze,
 And lightning glimmering Xanthus with their rays.
 The long reflections of the distant fires
 Gleam on the walls, and tremble on the spires;
 A thousand piles the dusky horrors gild,
 And shoot a shady lustre o'er the field.
 Full fifty guards each flaming pile attend,
 Whose unnumbered arms by fits thick flashes send;
 Loud neigh the coursers o'er their heaps of corn,
 And ardent warriors wait the rising morn.

From this, let us make a transition to Barry Cornwall, who, among many other sweet things, has a delicious little song called *The Nights*. As we honour every one who loves the night, which is the period of inspiration for mortals, we shall reproduce this charming poem entire, that our readers may go, if they have not gone already, to the works of this poet, which are full of the spirit of gentleness and love:—

Oh, the summer night
 Has a smile of light,
 And she sits on a sapphire throne;
 Whilst the sweet winds load her
 With garlands of odour,
 From the bud to the rose o'erblown!
 But the autumn night
 Has a piercing sight,
 And a step both strong and free;
 And a voice for wonder,
 Like the wrath of the thunder,
 When he shouts to the stormy sea.
 And the winter night
 Is all cold and white,
 And she singeth a song of pain,
 Till the wild-bee hummeth,
 And warm spring cometh,
 When she dies in a dream of rain!
 O the night, the night!
 'Tis a lovely sight,
 Whatever the clime or time,
 For sorrow then soareth,
 And the lover outpoureth
 His soul in a star-bright rhyme.
 It bringeth sleep
 To the forests deep,
 The forest-bird to its nest;
 To care, bright hours,
 And dreams of flowers,
 And that balm to the weary—rest!

Here, however, we must stop, for Aurora is beginning to purple the east, and admonishes us that we have wandered long enough among the shades of night. When we next take up the poets, it will be to converse with them on a very different subject. Yet we linger on the moonlight hills, and are strangely loath to emerge from this dusky fascination.

THE MONTH:

SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A VOICE in favour of education is making itself heard from an unusual quarter—the Royal Institution, where seven lectures are to be given on different branches of the all-important subject. The Master of Trinity leads off with a discourse on the moral and mental, to be followed by Faraday, Latham, Daubeny, Tyndall, Paget, and Hodgson, who will each advocate a special branch, all more or less taking the scientific view. Thus, the history of science, language, chemistry, physics, physiology, and economic science will in turn be brought forward, and their value as means of intellectual education be demonstrated. If as much good should result from these lectures as from those given to earnest throngs of working-men at the School of Mines, education will have received a beneficial impulse; one that is much needed, if we may judge from a speech delivered to the 'hands' on strike at Stockport by one of their orators. This teacher of the multitude told them that distress at home is caused by our foreign trade; that the further we send our manufactures, the more is their value reduced, and the greater the injustice to those who produce them. If the 'hands' would but find out that they have heads, such stuff as this would never be listened to.

There is something touching in the petition presented to parliament by 3000 miners of Durham and Northumberland, praying the legislative authority to step in between them and the risks to which they are exposed, and to which they fall victims, at the rate of 1000 a year. What they ask is reasonable enough—that provision shall be made 'for obliging all owners of collieries to provide such quantities of good air in accordance with the number of workmen employed, the character of the mine, and so forth, as will insure a healthy state of the workings for each man, and prevent accumulations of fire-damp in any part of such pits or collieries.' Seeing that mines can be properly ventilated, that the miners ask no more than science or skill can accomplish, we hope some decided means will be taken to remove the dangers and evils which attend their employment. Men are too valuable now-a-days for us to go on flinging 1000 a year to destruction.

Hostile politics have not put a stop to emigration: ships are still sailing every week for Australia and North America with their hundreds of passengers. The *Times* correspondent in the East suggests, that instead of betaking themselves to the scorching and sandy shores of the former country, or exposing themselves to the bitter winters of the latter, they should emigrate to Turkey, where, at a comparatively short distance from home, are to be found some of the best natural advantages in the world. The shores are washed by the great central sea, there are rivers, bays, and noble harbours, fertile soil, and productions equal to any. With English industry and perseverance, what would not such a country become? the great trade to the East would again flow in its old channel, and order and security would reign where they have long been strangers. But ere this can take place, the elements of discord must be reduced to reason.

Judging from the fact, that plans for 140 railway bills have been brought before parliament this session, railway enterprise is not yet dispirited. There is talk, moreover, of a line direct to the north for the exclusive

transport of coal and bulky goods, with which the existing lines are too much encumbered, to the prejudice of the passenger-traffic. With all this, there is a constant endeavour towards greater safety in locomotion: the hollow axles for railway-carriages, introduced some time ago, are found, on further trial, to be preferable to those made solid. In weight alone, there is a saving of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hundredweight on each pair of axles—no unimportant item in a thousand carriages. A block, weighing nearly a ton, being let to fall from a height of twelve feet on both kinds of axles, by way of experiment, the solid were invariably seen to give way first. They break across; while the hollow ones, when they fail, open lengthwise only, and thus there is little risk of detachment of the wheels. There is a new method, too, for clearing boiler-tubes of the ashes, cinders, and incrustations which, as is well known, collect within them. The usual process is to push a long ramrod through, which drives everything before it—a task of nearly an hour; but by means of a flexible pipe, fitted with a nozzle, and leading from the steam-chamber, a blast of steam may be blown through every tube, and all the accumulations cleared away in ten minutes. We hear that an attempt has been made on one of the lines between New York and Philadelphia to obviate the noise and uneasy jolting, by laying down sleepers of india-rubber, whereby an easy, elastic motion is given to a passing train. We think it likely that this is an experiment requiring multiplied experience in different temperatures before it can be pronounced successful. The Egyptian railway is so far advanced, that fifty miles of it were used for the transport of one of the last overland mails. The tunnel through the Alps is now to be outdone by one through the Andes—that is, if the projectors who wish to make a railway from Brazil to Chili can accomplish their purpose. We may not inappropriately round off these railway items by mentioning the noble statue of George Stephenson, placed a week or two since in the hall of the Euston Square terminus. It is a fitting site for the marble image of the self-reliant Northumbrian miner, who came from the depths of the earth to teach men how to travel on its surface. He is one of those heroes of whom England has reason to be proud; and while locomotives roll along their iron path, he will not be forgotten.

M. Coste reports to the Académie, that the breeding of salmon by artificial means has gone on successfully: new species from other countries have been introduced into the establishments on the Loire, at Saumur, and in the department of the Isère; and into those in the Vosges a large kind of trout from Switzerland. It is thought that something similar might be attempted on the sea-shore; and at Rochelle a project has been mooted for the 'cultivation' of oysters and prawns. Mr Boccius says that he, and not the two French fishermen, was the originator of pisciculture; and he intends to shew that the process is more simple than has been supposed, the grand elements of success being pure air and pure water. The late earthquake in Calabria has again set geologists speculating: M. Perrey finds reason to believe that the shocks, in some degree, depend on the moon, as they most frequently occur when our satellite passes the meridian.

Father Secchi, of the Observatory at Rome, traces a marked connection between perturbations of the magnet and appearances of aurora; and these perturbations, he believes, frequently indicate the presence of an aurora in a high northern latitude, although invisible to us; and, what is more, he suggests that they are sometimes caused by the passage of aërolites through our atmosphere. According to Boussingault, the rain which falls in towns contains much more ammonia than in remote rural districts, and in greater quantity at the beginning than the end of a shower. He finds, also, that ammonia is always present in dew; and in so

unusual a proportion in some of the November mists, as to exert a noxious influence.

From certain statistical returns which have been laid before the Académie, we gather a few interesting particulars concerning professors of the medical art on the other side of the Channel. It appears that there are in France 11,217 physicians, 7221 officers of health, 5175 druggists; yet, large as this number is, there are 591 communes, each of more than 2000 inhabitants, in which not an individual of the three classes here mentioned is resident. Another return on the subject of births shews, that where 123 children are born between 9 P.M. and 9 A.M., 100 only are born within the other twelve hours. Here is a fact useful to those who know how to employ it: there is a gas talked of, which, directed in a stream against an irritable abscess, is said to allay the torment forthwith—another addition to the value of life.

Now that the science of life is better understood than formerly, facts have come to have a significance too long lost sight of, particularly as relates to the maintenance of a military system. Of the 180,000 young men drafted every year for the army in France, one-third of the strongest and stoutest are made into soldiers; the others, among whom are the stunted, the weakly, and deformed, are sent back to their homes, where they marry and beget children, who inherit their imperfections. In this way the *physique* of the nation is gradually deteriorating, and at a rate that appears rapid when a quarter of a century is brought under review. The drawing away of young men from their ordinary pursuits for military service, is thus an evil of grave import in more senses than one; but, judging from the present aspect of affairs, the true remedy is not likely to be adopted for some time to come. In Prussia, too, similar effects have been noticed: out of the youths of nineteen who were inspected last year throughout that kingdom, not more than half the numbers assembled were sound and stout enough for service, the rural districts being as bad as the large towns. It would seem that, with improving education, the stamina of the people weaken or decay. In Sweden, also, the same result has been observed; but there it is attributed to potato-diet and a habit of much spirit-drinking. Have governments yet to discover a means for preserving the bone and muscle of peoples, or must the people find it for themselves? In respect of education: of the men examined in Berlin, 95 per cent. were found to be fully educated, and 5 per cent. defective. In the provinces, 75 per cent. only had gone through their school course; 20 per cent. were defective, and the remainder altogether uneducated. The Polish and Wendish provinces were the most backward.

The uneasiness felt a short time since at the growing scarcity of rags is subsiding, for it is now found that good paper can be made from the refuse of the sugar-cane, and from wood-fibre, the latter being L.12 a ton cheaper than that made from rags. The plantain, too, has been tried, and successfully, as was demonstrated by some specimens of plantain-paper exhibited at a meeting of the Horticultural Society. Printers and publishers, and those who deal in penny-periodicals, may therefore take heart: their profit will not be all swallowed up by the cost of the paper, as there was reason to fear.

From a communication made to the Geological Society, we find that the fossils of our Devonian system are more widely spread than would at one time have been thought credible, numerous specimens having been found by the explorers in the polar regions; while in the British Museum may now be seen a collection sent from Kwangsi, in the south of China.

Mr Beecroft, for many years British consul on the western coast of Africa, has at length, after repeated attempts, found the junction of the Benue and Niger rivers. It is a feat worth recording, for his last effort

took six weeks of laborious search among mangrove swamps and slimy creeks. If by this discovery the interior be rendered more accessible, our traders will soon doubtless follow Dr Barth to Timbuctoo.

Chevalier Vande Velde, of Utrecht, known for his travels in the Holy Land and surrounding countries, has addressed a letter to the Archaeological Association of Palestine, in which he recommends them not to believe M. de Sauley's statements about the Cities of the Plain; for that the so-called cities are nothing other than broken masses of a mountain, which the Arabs succeeded in making the too credulous Frenchman believe to be the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah. Colonel Rawlinson sends from Bagdad news of the discovery of more cylinders, at a spot identified as the ancient Ur of the Chaldees, which are of importance in clearing up a difficulty in the annals of Belshazzar. He now considers that monarch to have been a viceroy under his father Nabonidus; and thus these new-found records, as he states, 'furnish us with a key to the explanation of that great historical problem which has hitherto defied solution.' Besides this, the colonel has got a statue of the god Nebo, which was dug up by the party of explorers employed for the British Museum. An inscription on its breast contains the names of Belochus and Sammuramit, or Semiramis. So the great queen comes out of the mists of fable at last; and, disregarding all that has been said about her and Ninus, our persevering countryman makes her out to have been the daughter of a king of Medo-Armenia, who married Phal-lukha, or Belochus, and reigned jointly with him over Assyria in the eighth century before Christ.

CUTTING-OUT.

THERE is a certain delicate and desperate species of naval service in which British seamen are peculiarly distinguished as able, and frequently successful, professional operators: it is called *cutting-out*. This very rarely takes place on any extended scale, and it is equally rare for any large force of men to be employed upon it. As a general rule, cutting-out is performed without much premeditation or nice calculation of risks: it is usually planned by some young spirited officer in command of a frigate or small flotilla, and undertaken almost impromptu by himself and other daring naval aspirants, as much from a feverish resolve to distinguish themselves, and earn promotion by 'doing something,' as from any other motive. It is rarely we find veteran officers of high rank engaging in such desperate adventures, unless there is a very important stake to be gained—some object either of extraordinary intrinsic value, or else likely to lead to commensurate advantages. It is a service *sui generis*, requiring particular faculties, distinct and different from those essential in other branches of the service. Young, dashing fellows, of dauntless bravery—

That for itself can woo the approaching fight,
And turn what some deem danger to delight—

who can coolly and skillfully lay down their plans, and daringly execute them in person, are the men to succeed on the occasions in question.

Suppose a frigate chases an enemy, of equal, or superior, or inferior force—no matter which—and that enemy, by dint of shewing a nimble pair of heels, runs into a friendly harbour before he can be overtaken. Here the Don, or Mynheer, or Mounseer, or Moslem, or whatever he may be, shelters himself by mooring stem and stern under the guns of a battery on shore, and grins defiance at his disappointed pursuer. What is to be done? The British frigate sails as closely in as may be prudent or possible, and hovers about till sunset, meanwhile diligently taking note by aid of her glasses—as telescopes are called on shipboard—of the

position of the coveted prize, and the nature of the shore defences, and all other obstacles to her capture; then, ere nightfall, tacks about, shews her stern, and steers directly out to sea, as though sullenly confessing she has no chance. Has the captain given up all hope of doing business?—Not a bit of it. He dives down into his cabin, and, either alone or in consultation with his lieutenants, rapidly plans a cutting-out. The crew are duly mustered, and their commander's intention being promulgated, they give a cheer like true British sailors, and eagerly volunteer for the boat-service. The required number are promptly selected, armed with cutlasses, pistols, and boarding-pikes, and a strip of white ribbon tied round their left arms, to distinguish them in the coming tussle. It is clearly settled what boats are to be despatched, what officers are to command, what seamen and marines are to go in each boat, and in what order the boats are to lead and board, &c. As soon as it is dark enough, the frigate points her head for the shore again, and probably about midnight, after extinguishing or shading every light, brings-to in a position deemed most favourable for her to await the result of the enterprise. Pinnace, cutter, jolly, and gig, are silently lowered; the men take their appointed places; and without a word being spoken, the carefully muffled oars are dropped into the water, and the boats glide noiselessly towards their destination. Of the rowers, it may be truly said that, in the regular man-o'-war fashion,

Bending back, away they pull
With measured strokes most beautiful!

But on these momentous occasions they poise their oars so deftly, feather them so gently and accurately, and dip the edge of their blades with such keenness and precision, that there is no splash in the water, and no rumble from the row-locks; and should the sea be smooth, a musical ripple at the stem, and an undertoned gurgling sound in the runs of the stern, alone betoken the propulsion of the boat. Possibly, they may get close alongside, or even board the enemy's ship ere they are discovered; but in general a better watch is kept, and they will find the sentinels on the alert, and be fired at the moment they come in sight. No matter. As soon as silence and precaution are no longer of use, every boat cheers loudly, and dashes recklessly forward in eager emulation as to which shall be the first to board. Soon they are alongside, the men climbing up the chains, and clambering over the boarding-nettings, despite the fierce thrust of pike and cutlass, or the deadlier resistance of musket and bayonet. All is now desperate hand-to-hand fighting; and whilst it rages, a party of our frigate's men run aloft to loose the topsails, and others cut the cables, so as to get the enemy under-way, and out of the range of the shore-battery as speedily as possible. When resistance is overcome, the crew of the captured vessel are driven headlong below, and secured beneath the hatches, and the gallant cutters-out sheet home the sails, or, if the wind is dead, tow the ship out of harbour with their boats. Ere this time, probably, the battery on shore opens a furious fire, which may kill friend and foe indiscriminately; but British tars are not easily deterred from carrying out a cherished design; and unless the masts and rigging are materially shattered, the vessel is quickly beyond range of the hostile cannon, and, when morning breaks, the triumphant frigate and her prize are mere specks in the offing. Occasionally, however, the result is sadly different. The enemy may be so well prepared, that some of the boats may be sunk ere they can pull alongside, and the men who manage to board may be all slain or taken prisoners.

We have recently searched our naval chronicles, and have conned over a great number of cutting-out affairs, and we now purpose to give some account of two or

three, which appear to us to be the most remarkable and brilliant on record, and cannot fail to impress the reader with a vivid conception of the truly marvellous deeds of naval skill and daring that British men-of-war's men will undertake and perform. One case is an honourable failure; but we will give it the first place, both for the sake of chronology, and because it was planned and attempted to be carried to a successful issue by the justly celebrated Sir Sydney Smith, and led to other incidents of historical note.

In the spring of 1796, Sir Sydney was cruising on the French coast in command of the *Diamond*, 38-gun frigate, when he learned that the *Vengeur*, an armed French lugger—only too well known in the Channel for her numerous captures of English merchantmen, and which had hitherto defied capture herself through her wonderful sailing qualities—was anchored, ready for sailing, in the inner road of Havre. Sir Sydney resolved to cut her out; and accordingly prepared the launch and four other boats of his frigate, in which he embarked fifty-two officers and men, all told, and took the command of the whole himself, because his three lieutenants were, from one cause or other, unavailable for the duty. At 10 p.m. they set off, and after a brief struggle, seized the *Vengeur* without the loss of a man. But the difficulty was, not to win this prize, but to carry her out to the offing. The French crew had cut their cables, and the lugger drifted bodily shoreward, spite every effort of the capturers. By daybreak, the lugger was anchored up the river beyond Havre, and a number of vessels put forth from that town to re-capture the prize, which Sir Sydney, on his part, was resolved to defend to the utmost. He first sent the prisoners ashore, and then prepared for action. In a brief period, a large lugger opened fire on the *Vengeur*, and numbers of small vessels, full of soldiers, surrounded her, and poured in volleys of musketry. There being no wind to fill his sails, the gallant British captain found he had become thoroughly entrapped, and at length surrendered, with a loss of about a dozen killed and wounded. Sir Sydney Smith was removed to Paris, where he suffered a rigorous imprisonment of two years, and was even threatened with death on the pretence that he was a spy. Finally, he effected his escape from the Temple in a characteristically romantic and daring fashion, the details of which are probably well known to the reader.

In the year 1797, a fearful mutiny took place on board the *Hermione*, 38-gun frigate, commanded by Captain Pigot, when cruising off Porto Rico in the West Indies. The excessively cruel and monstrously tyrannical conduct of the captain, appears to have been the sole cause of this affair; but the mutineers were not content with sacrificing that wretched man, for they murdered nine other officers, and then carried the frigate to La Guayra, and traitorously gave her up to the Spaniards; and as a Spanish frigate she subsequently sailed the seas. Many of the mutineers paid the deserved penalty of their crimes. In 1799, this same *Hermione* was reported to be bound from Puerto-Capello to Havana, having a crew of nearly 400 men, including a number of soldiers, and mounting forty-four guns, or six more than when she was a British frigate. The British admiral at Jamaica ordered the *Surprise*, Captain Hamilton, to go out and try to meet with the *Hermione*. The *Surprise* was a 28-gun frigate, with a complement of less than 200 men, and therefore in all respects very inferior to the vessel she was sent to engage; but sailors in those busy fighting-times did not care to calculate odds very nicely: they were all ready to swear that one Englishman was, any day and in any way, a match, and more than a match, for two Mounseers, or three Dons. However, no such encounter and triumph was destined for the British frigate this time, for after Captain Hamilton had cruised about for weeks without getting a glimpse

of his antagonist, he thought it best to sail to Puerto-Capello, and learn whether the latter had really left that port. Surely enough she had not, for between two enormous batteries at the harbour mouth, the *Hermione* was snugly moored stem and stern. For some days the *Surprise* hovered about, and finally Captain Hamilton informed his assembled crew that he had determined to cut out the *Hermione*—an intimation which they received with three hearty cheers. Six boats were prepared, carrying in all 106 officers and men; and explicit orders were given to every officer individually. Mr James gives a very minute and accurate account in his *Naval History* of this dashing enterprise; and we cannot do better than follow his version, and partially quote his narrative. Captain Hamilton in person commanded the pinnace, and directed the whole operations. The flotilla of boats were discovered when within a mile of the *Hermione*, and two of the enemy's gun-boats opened fire on them. Some of the frigate's boats foolishly engaged with these gun-boats, instead of following their captain straight to the main attack. 'The alarm created by the firing,' says Mr James, 'soon awakened the crew of the *Hermione* to the meditated attack. Lights were seen at every port; and the ship's company were at quarters. On the pinnace crossing the frigate's bows in order to reach her station, a shot was fired from the fore-castle, which crossed over her. . . . As the starboard oars touched the bends of the *Hermione*, Captain Hamilton gave orders to lay in the oars and board, the boat being then under the starboard cat-head and fore-chains, lying stem and stern with the frigate. The crew obeyed the word instantly; and the captain would have been the first on board, but from some mud on the anchor—which was hanging from the cat and shank-painter, and which had been weighed that day—his foot slipped; but he retained his hold on the foremost lanyard of the fore-shrouds, by which he recovered himself, his pistol going off in the struggle. Having succeeded in gaining a footing on the fore-castle, the English freed the foresail ready for bending and hauling out to the yardarms, laying over the forestay; and this served for an excellent screen to these few daring men now on board.' By this time, the Spanish crew, at quarters on the main-deck, were firing away, not yet being aware they were actually boarded; but the Spaniards on the quarter-deck warmly disputed their post, and a fierce hand-to-hand encounter ensued, Captain Hamilton himself being wounded severely. At a critical moment, the marines from one of the cutters boarded, and gave a turn to the fight. They fired a volley down the after-hatchway, and then rushed below with fixed bayonets, driving sixty Spaniards into the cabin, and there securing them. The cables now were cut, and with the aid of the foretopail and the boats, the *Hermione* was got under-way, and stood out of Puerto-Capello, despite the fire of the formidable batteries, which, however, cut up the rigging, and lodged some balls below the water-line. The boarding commenced at midnight, and by one o'clock all resistance ceased, and in another hour the prize was safely out of gunshot, and in full possession of the daring captors.

Only twelve British seamen were wounded, and none killed; but the Spaniards suffered the amazing loss of 119 killed, and 97 wounded—in all, 216, or above one-half of their entire crew! Even Mr James, who is usually so cool and guarded in expressing his opinions, and who is admitted to have written his great work with the nicest impartiality, cannot help warming when narrating the affair; and he justly and strikingly sums it up by saying, that 'the history of naval warfare, from the earliest time to this date, affords no parallel to this dashing affair: it was no surprise, no creeping on the sleepy unawares; the crew of the frigate were at quarters, standing to their guns, aware of the attack, armed, prepared, in readiness;

and that frigate was captured by the crews of three boats, the first success being gained by sixteen men. . . . The best record of this well-planned, well-executed, daring, gallant enterprise, is to be found in the Painted Hall at Greenwich Hospital.' For this exploit, Captain Hamilton was knighted; the House of Assembly at Jamaica voted him a sword worth 300 guineas; and the Common Council of London voted him the freedom of the city. As to the *Hermione*, she was restored to her rank in the British navy, under the significant name of the *Retribution*.

Our next and concluding narrative of cutting-out is more modern in date, and the distinguished hero of it is yet, we are happy to say, living, full of years and honours. Lord Cochrane (since 1831, the Earl of Dundonald) has ever been reckoned unsurpassed for the very remarkable valour and daring skill displayed by him during many of the earlier and happier years of his naval career, prior to 1814, when his professional prospects were destroyed by the lamentable stock-jobbing hoax, in which, there is now every reason to believe, he was a mere dupe of scheming villains, and far more to be pitied than condemned. Up to that period, there was not a more active, skilful, and successful officer in the whole navy; in proof of which it is worth mentioning, that during the ten months he commanded the *Speedy* sloop of fourteen guns, he captured the vast number of thirty-three vessels, mounting in all 128 guns. This by the way. In 1818, he became commander-in-chief of the navy of Chili in South America, and soon afterwards occurred the brilliant affair which is the means of introducing him to the reader of this article. The Chilians, we must premise, were fighting for their independence against the Spaniards. Lord Cochrane anchored with some ships in the outer roadstead of Callao, and at the same time there lay in the inner harbour a large forty-gun Spanish frigate named the *Esmeralda*, and two sloops of war, with fourteen gun-boats, and other defences disposed around them, besides the protection of a formidable range of batteries ashore. The frigate was well prepared for defence; nevertheless Lord Cochrane determined to cut her out. For this purpose, he collected about 240 volunteers from his vessels, and placed them in fourteen boats, which, in two divisions, proceeded to carry out the desperate enterprise, commanded by his lordship in person, on 5th November 1820. The result may be given in the words of Captain Basil Hall:—'At midnight, the boats having forced their way across the boom, Lord Cochrane, who was leading, rowed alongside the first gun-boat, and taking the officer by surprise, proposed to him, with a pistol at his head, the alternative of "Silence or death!" No reply was made; the boats pushed on unobserved, and Lord Cochrane, mounting the *Esmeralda's* side, was the first to give the alarm. The sentinel on the gangway levelled his piece and fired, but was instantly cut down by the cockswain; and his lordship, though wounded in the thigh, at the same moment stepped on the deck. The frigate being boarded with no less gallantry on the opposite side by Captain Guise, who met Lord Cochrane mid-way on the quarter-deck, and also by Captain Crosby, the after-part of the ship was soon carried, sword in hand. The Spaniards rallied on the fore-castle, where they made a desperate resistance, till overpowered by a fresh party of seamen and marines, headed by Lord Cochrane. A gallant stand was again made on the main-deck; but before one o'clock the ship was captured, her cables cut, and she was steered triumphantly out of the harbour, under the fire of the whole north force of the castle. The *Hyperion*, an English, and the *Macedonian*, an American frigate, which were at anchor close to the scene of action, got under-way when the action commenced; and in order to prevent their being mistaken by the batteries for the *Esmeralda*, shewed distinguished signals; but

Lord Cochrane, who had foreseen and provided even for this minute circumstance, hoisted the same lights as the American and English frigates, and thus rendered it impossible for the batteries to discriminate between the three ships. The *Esmeralda*, in consequence, was very little injured by the shot from the batteries. The Spaniards had upwards of 120 men killed and wounded; the Chilians, eleven killed and thirty wounded.'

LIQUID INDIA-RUBBER.

A correspondent of a New York paper, writing from Para, in Brazil, says: 'There is a method in preparing the gum, which has recently been patented, and which differs essentially from the usual curdling. The milk, as drawn from the tree, is put into large glass bottles and demi-johns; a preparation of some chemical nature, which is a secret, is mixed with the milk, and the bottles are securely sealed. In this way the gum is sent to the United States. It curdles twenty-four hours after exposure to the air, and forms a pure, white, solid, and remarkably strong rubber. There is only one house in Para which has the secret of this receipt, as I learn, and a member of the firm gives his personal attention to the preparation of the article, some thousands of miles in the interior of the country.'

'KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.'

30th April 1854.—SIR.—Since the popular acceptance of the motto, 'knowledge is power,' is not deducible from anything Bacon ever uttered, would it not be well to explain how the remark became attributed to him? When I saw you notice it in your very intelligent Journal (February 2), I hoped others would have asked you to do this, and spared me the trouble of copying and translating the following extract. Speaking of the sources of heresy and religious error, Bacon has this passage (*Meditationes Sacre de Heresibus*, p. 747): 'Tertius gradus est eorum qui arceant et restringant opinionem priorem tantum ad actiones humanas que participant ex peccato, quas volunt substantive, absque nexu aliquo causarum, ex internâ voluntate et arbitrio humano pendere, statuuntque latiores terminos scientiæ Dei quam potestatis: vel potius ejus partis potestatis Dei (nam et ipsa scientia potestas est), quâ scit, quam ejus quâ movet et agit; ut præsciat quendam otiose, quæ non predestinet et præordinet. Sed quicquid a Deo non pendet, ut auctore et principio, per nexum et gradus subordinatos, id loco Dei erit, et novum principium, et deaster quidam.' 'The third kind is that of those who restrain and confine the former opinion simply to the actions of men which partake of sin, which they will have to depend, directly and without any intervention of causes, upon the internal disposition and will of man, and who consider the limits of God's knowledge as more extensive than those of his power; or rather of that part of God's power—for even knowledge itself is power—with which he takes cognizance, than of that with which he moves and acts; as though God foreknew some things inactively, which he does not predestinate and foreordain. But whatever does not depend upon God, as its author and source, by subordinate links and steps, that will be in God's place, even a new principle and a certain little divinity.' Bacon, then, does say, knowledge is power; but he is speaking of God's knowledge, which he considers not less circumscribed than, and the same with, God's power. Sir E. Bulwer Lytton must have overlooked this passage, or he would hardly have said the aphorism was that of the Indexmaker, or have made the remarks he does in the note to Book iv., Chap. xix., of *My Novel*, as well as in Dr Riccabocca's conversation in that chapter.—I am, &c. GEO. H. BILLINGTONS, M.A.

Watbury, Salop.

[In Bohn's edition of Bacon's Works, 2 vols., 1846, the passage occurs in vol. ii., p. 730.—Ed.]

THE BEAM AND WHEEL EXPERIMENT.

With reference to this experiment, alluded to in 'The Month' (Science and Arts) for April, a correspondent suggests the following as a solution: 'If a beam is balanced, as stated, upon an upright standard, and any weight, whether wheel or not, is attached to one end, the beam will alter its position according to the weight attached; but mark, if it is a wheel that is attached, and that wheel is made to rotate rapidly, you instantly divide the weight of the wheel into two equal parts—one part going downward, and the other part going (by the velocity) upward; therefore, from this simple cause, while the wheel is in rapid motion the beam will not lose its gravity.'

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